

Measuring Performance

“This year, measure performance by what you have learned, not just what you have earned.”

Key Tips to Build a Profitable Learning Strategy

As we kick off 2019 with new goals and objectives, the work I am doing in organizational development must be measured with a new yardstick: measure what you have learned, not just what you have earned.

An everyday reality for organizations is dealing with change, and consequently, to be adaptable and manage this reality, many companies tend to focus on technology upgrades and business processes. This ideology is effective, but it is limiting. Today, those that manage change and maintain a high level of performance are those who anticipate change, manage change, and learn in the moment.

The one common denominator that I have seen that allows individuals to manage new technology and innovative processes is a performance focused culture - an organizational mindset that is supported by a comprehensive learning and development strategy. Done right, strategic learning and development boosts competencies and drives the psychological shift essential for creating a performance focused culture.

In the most recent *Top 100 Canadian Companies to Work For*, the one common theme amongst all organizations was their focus and abundant opportunities for their people to learn and apply their learnings back in the workplace. The organizations on this list clearly understand the link between learning, earning, and engagement. What has supported organizations that I have facilitated learning programs for or coached is that the learning experience is a key part of the organizational vision. Here are key steps to ensure that your organization is building a **performance focused culture** that delivers bottom-line results:

1. Create A Learning Vision

Whether it is a sports organization or a business unit, both groups must have a game plan to achieve the common goal of winning the game or building the business. A **strategic learning journey** is tailored to support all efforts of the greater organizational strategy to meet the goals, objectives, and targets set out in the business plan. Aligning learning initiatives and development programs with the business focus (short and long-term) will set a clear direction that all levels of the organization can connect with.

**LEARNING &
EARNING**



2. Listen Carefully

Organizations move better and faster when everyone is playing their role, however the focus on only my role only can make it a difficult to understand where people are and what they need to grow. **So, ask questions and listen carefully.**

When framed positively, employees will be forthcoming in discussions about strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and opportunities. Whether it is a survey, skills matrix questionnaire, focus group, or round table, listening to the outcomes and comments will enable an organization to identify the learning activities you need to implement. Carefully listening to your employees will help you find out what learners need so that your strategy can then deliver.

3. Customized Experience

The single, most important effective learning principle that impacts business results is ensuring that from beginning to end, the experience is highly personalized and customized. To create a performance culture, **participant-focused design and delivery** is a key aspect of increasing skills and motivating employees. Customization of learning opportunities ensures that each person will get just what they need, when they need it, and also increases buy-in and excitement across the organization to any proposed learning opportunities.

4. Support Leaders

Supporting the leaders is the cornerstone to learning and earning, because without strong leaders, nothing happens. This is especially detrimental in the engagement category. People leave managers, not workplaces, therefore it's critical to invest in and **support senior staff**. This will help to sustain the learning, since this group is often forgotten about when it comes to making sure that the new insights, attitudes, or skills are implemented in their team members day to day work.

5. Values First

Putting values first links back to the first step - creating a learning vision. Considering the goal is to create a performance focused culture, finding ways to **integrate core values** into the fabric of the business, both in terms of learning and earning, is essential.

A company's values should drive how everyone empowers themselves to add to the organization. Whether they be values of integrity, transparency, or communication, **translating those values into appropriate learning initiatives** and the overall learning and development strategy will have huge payoffs. Integrating the values in to these areas also makes an impact for employees when planning or having development discussions, facilitating 360-degree feedback processes, or preparing for performance review conversations.

These key steps will support an organization in creating a solid foundation that drives performance. Some of the steps can be carried out in parallel and solutions can be built over time once the over-arching strategy is established. However, the efforts in developing people consistently helps in many

ways. The employees are more knowledgeable, they are more confident, they are better able to meet the needs of internal and external clients, they are more resilient, and they are more likely to stick around. Ultimately, the increase in learning will positively impact the earning for everyone.

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Corey's focus is to deliver meaningful and measurable strategies for organizations to harness team potential and create engaging leaders. With 20+ years in the learning, development and training industry, Corey is well known for his ability to connect with any audience at any size. He has provided participant focused learning and development design and consulting, professional speaking, coaching and training for organizations of all sizes across North America. He has a focused results-based partnership approach to develop and deliver customized solutions that meet an organization's unique business needs and resolve their most significant issues, helping them to create a lasting competitive advantage.